

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

1. (currently amended) A method for combining independent scene layers to form computer generated environments, comprising the steps of:
 - constructing a terrain layer using stored terrain data;
 - generating a feature layer using feature layer data that is configured to be modified independently and stored separately from the stored terrain data; ~~and~~
 - applying different run-time response rules to the terrain layer and the feature layer;
 - combining the feature layer and the terrain layer to form a composite environment; and
 - rendering the composite environment for viewing.
2. (cancelled)
3. (original) A method as in claim 1, wherein the step of generating a feature layer further comprises the step of generating a plurality of feature layers that are configured to be combined together with other feature and terrain layers.
4. (original) A method as in claim 1, further comprising the step of determining the locations of features in the feature layer in reference to the terrain layer.
- 5-38. (cancelled)
39. (previously presented) A method as in claim ~~21~~, wherein the step of rendering the composite environment for viewing further comprises the step of resolving conflicts between layers.
40. (cancelled)
41. (previously presented) A method as in claim 1, further comprising the step of defining different run-time response rules for the terrain layer and the feature layer.

42. (previously presented) A method as in claim 41, wherein the step of defining different run-time response rules for the terrain layer and the feature layer further comprises providing a level-of-detail control for the terrain layer and a separate level-of-detail control for the feature layer.
43. (previously presented) A method as in claim 41, wherein the step of defining different run-time response rules for the terrain layer and the feature layer further comprises specifying a field-of-view control for the terrain layer and a separate field-of-view control for the feature layer.
44. (previously presented) A method as in claim 1, further comprising the steps of:
modifying the feature layer; and
recompiling the feature layer independently from the terrain layer.
45. (previously presented) A method for combining independent scene layers to form computer generated environments, comprising the steps of:
- a. constructing a terrain layer using stored terrain data;
 - b. generating a feature layer using feature layer data that is stored separately from the stored terrain data;
 - c. combining the feature layer and the terrain layer to form a composite environment; and
 - d. defining a run-time response rule for the terrain layer and a different run-time response rule for the feature layer.
46. (previously presented) A method as in claim 45, wherein the step of defining different run-time response rules for the terrain layer and the feature layer further comprises providing a level-of-detail control for the terrain layer and a separate level-of-detail control for the feature layer.

47. (previously presented) A method as in claim 45, wherein the step of defining different run-time response rules for the terrain layer and the feature layer further comprises specifying a field-of-view control for the terrain layer and a separate field-of-view control for the feature layer.
48. (previously presented) A method for combining independent scene layers to form computer generated environments, comprising the steps of:
- constructing a terrain layer using stored terrain data;
 - generating a feature layer using feature layer data that is configured to be modified independently and stored separately from the stored terrain data;
 - combining the feature layer and the terrain layer to form a composite environment;
 - and
 - defining a run-time response rule for the terrain layer and a different run-time response rule for the feature layer.
49. (previously presented) A method as in claim 48, further comprising the step of rendering the composite environment for viewing.
50. (previously presented) A method as in claim 49, wherein the step of rendering the composite environment for viewing further comprises the step of applying different run-time response rules to the terrain layer and the feature layer
51. (previously presented) A method as in claim 49, wherein the step of rendering the composite environment for viewing further comprises the step of resolving conflicts between layers